

[3rd February 1925]

The hon. Sir ARTHUR KNAPP :—" I want to know to what passage my hon. Friend is referring me."

Mr. R. VEERIAN :—" I want to know whether the Government are aware if such distribution took place and if so whether they are allowed to take any part in the same "

The hon. Sir ARTHUR KNAPP :—" The Government have no information at present."

Emigration.

Recruitment of labour to Assam.

* 3 Q.—Mr. S. SATYAMURTI: Will the hon. the Home Member be pleased to state—

(a) whether his attention has been drawn to the statement in the letter of the Government of Assam to the Government of Madras, dated 1st August 1924, in which a statement occurs 'that it is possible that the men were of an unsuitable type for recruitment to Assam' and whether the matter is being investigated by the Government;

(b) whether his attention has been drawn to a statement contained in the letter of the 18th August 'that some of the immigrants were not of the labouring class' and the reasons why this happened; and

(c) whether the figures given in the report appended to the letter of the Government of Assam, dated the 9th of October 1924, as regards wages are correct and, if so, whether the wages are sufficient to keep body and soul together?

A.—(a) & (b) It is a fact, as explained in the course of a recent debate in this House, that some of the labourers who went to Assam from the Ceded districts were of an unsuitable type, inasmuch as they were not accustomed to agricultural work. The Assam Labour Board is alive to the desirability of avoiding a recurrence of this incident. The cases however where the recruiting agency were deceived into passing such men were comparatively few and the great bulk of the labourers appear to have been men suited for labour on the estates. No further investigation on this particular point is being made.

(c) From the paper referred to by the hon. Member himself it will be seen that the rates, Rs. 7 for a male and Rs. 6 for a female labourer, represent the amount paid when the labourer does only the minimum daily task, occupying a few hours in the day. Anyone who chooses to do a full day's work, such as he would do in his own home, receives much more. It has already been stated in this House that in some gardens at least Rs. 7 for a man is certainly a living wage, more particularly when he can buy his rice at considerably below market rates.

Mr. S. SATYAMURTI :—" Sir, with reference to the answer to clauses (a) and (b), may I ask the hon. the Home Member whether to his knowledge any steps have been taken, apart from their being alive to the fact that a great bulk of them seem to have been men unsuited for labour on estates? "

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The hon. Sir ARTHUR KNAPP :—" I understand that it is the local agents who are mainly responsible for allowing these unsuitable persons to go. I should like to point out that the last thing the employers want is to waste money on taking unsuitable men to Assam."

Mr. S. SATYAMURTI :—" With reference to the answer to clause (c), may I know approximately what is meant by the words 'much more'? Assuming that he does a full day's labour, what will he get? "

The hon. Sir ARTHUR KNAPP :—" I think I mentioned these figures on the occasion of the debate recently on this matter. I gave Rs. 15 as the average for men and Rs. 9 for women but I have now reason to think that the latter figure is too low."

Mr. S. SATYAMURTI :—" Only one more question, Sir. Will the hon. the Home Member give us an idea as to what the concession rate is? "

The hon. Sir ARTHUR KNAPP :—" If I may be permitted to speak from memory, I think about Rs. 3 per maund is the concession rate at which rice is generally supplied to the Assam labourers."

European Education.

Levy of higher fees on Indian boys in European schools.

* 4 Q.—Mr. S. SATYAMURTI : Will the hon. the Home Member be pleased to state—

(a) whether he has completed his investigations into the grounds on which higher fees are being levied on Indian boys in European schools;

(b) if so, the result of the investigations and the action, if any, proposed to be taken by the Government; and

(c) if not, when the investigations are expected to be completed?

A.—The investigations have been completed. A copy of G.O. No. 1893, Law (Education), dated 4th December 1924, which contains the orders issued by the Government in the matter is placed on the table.

Mr. S. SATYAMURTI :—" With reference to the answer to this question, I am referred to Appendix II at page 77. May I ask the hon. the Home Member to say with reference to the first paragraph whether he can give us the number or the nature of cases in which the discrimination cannot be justified on the ground of extra work? "

The hon. Sir ARTHUR KNAPP :—" I am afraid I cannot give the figures. Differential rates have been charged in cases that were said to involve extra teaching work. But I cannot say exactly how many "

Mr. S. SATYAMURTI :—" May I ask if the Government have issued orders to stop any such discrimination where it could not be justified on any grounds of extra work? "

The hon. Sir ARTHUR KNAPP :—" That, I think, is clearly the purpose of the order. We have recognized that principle except in cases where there are endowments or benefaction set apart for special classes of children. Apart from that and apart from the cases where it is proved that extra work is involved, it is clear we do not allow discrimination."